

Serial No. **10/623,613**

Docket No. **P-0564**

Amdt. dated July 19, 2006

Reply to Office Action of April 4, 2006

REMARKS

By the present response, Applicant has canceled claims 3 and 11 without disclaimer. Further, Applicant has amended claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 12 and 17 to further clarify the invention. Claims 1, 2, 4-10 and 12-19 remain pending in the present application. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

In the Office Action, claims 5 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 10 and 17-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Applicant's admitted prior art (APA). Claims 5 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,838,766 (Rand). Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,599,583 (Shimozono). Claims 3, 6 and 11-13 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 14-16 are allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 14-16 and indicating that claims 3, 6 and 11-13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections

Claims 5 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicant has amended these claims to further clarify the invention and respectfully requests that these rejections be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 10 and 17-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by APA. Regarding claims 1, 7 and 17, Applicant has amended these claims with the subject matter of claims 3 and 11 deemed allowable by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant submits that these claims are patentable over the cited reference at least for these reasons.

Regarding claims 2, 4, 10, 18 and 19, Applicant submits that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1, 7 and 17 and, therefore, are patentable over the cited reference at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that the APA does not disclose or suggest the limitations in the combination of each of claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 10 and 17-19 of the present application. Applicant respectfully requests that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

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35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Claims 5 and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA and further in view of Rand. Applicant submits that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1 and 7 and, therefore, are patentable over the cited references at least for the same reasons noted previously regarding these independent claims.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 5 and 8 of the present application. Applicant respectfully requests that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA and further in view of Shimozono. Applicant submits that this claim is dependent on independent claim 7 and, therefore, is patentable over the cited references at least for the same reasons noted previously regarding this independent claim.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of claim 9 of the present application. Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn and that this claim be allowed.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that claims 1, 2, 4-10 and 12-19 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, Frederick D. Bailey, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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